

COMMISSIONER'S UPDATE

MASSACHUSETTS REHABILITATION COMMISSION

27 WORMWOOD STREET BOSTON, MASS. 02210

SEPTEMBER 2002



Commissioner Bartels reaches out

I am pleased to launch the first edition of the MRC's newest publication *Commissioner's Update*. It is my intention for this newsletter to showcase the wide array of top quality services available from staff at the MRC and help educate the public regarding important issues in the disability community.

In these days of financial constraints within state agencies, rather than dwelling on what we are no longer able to do, the MRC is doing its best to focus on its capabilities. A negative focus now would neglect the main funding and resources we still have available and the MRC has, within all of our agency divisions, \$110 million to perform our various mandates for the citizens with disabilities in the Commonwealth.

I know it has been difficult for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRC) to serve consumers without access to "Purchase of Service" dollars. However, I also know Counselors have a great deal more to offer than just purchased services. Now is the time for VRC's to show what they do best, with their high quality vocational counseling skills and extensive knowledge of community resources.

The MRC's Independent Living Case Managers are doing an excellent job living within available resources and making good use of the IL skills and the monies available within our very creative independence-oriented programs.

The DDS Division is not experiencing any financial stresses, but rather, has the constant challenge to process SSI/DI claims in great numbers and by making high quality decisions, which the DDS staff does reliably.

As always, the MRC staff will give it our best with what we have to offer. We have very knowledgeable staff committed to excellence and that will continue to make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities.

IN THIS ISSUE

1
Commissioner's
Message

2
Congressional Letter

3
The Cutting Edge

4
VR Division News
IL Division News
DDS Division News

5
Recognition

6
Impressions
from the Staff

7
The Bottom Line